

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:YO, US, XF, XW, XG

SUBJECT:AMBASSADOR BELOVSKI'S CALL ON THE SECRETARY

1. SUMMARY: THE SECRETARY RECEIVED BELOVSKI AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST ON FEBRUARY 23 TO DISCUSS THE MIDDLE EAST, EUROCOMMUNISM, CSCE, THE HORN OF AFRICA, BILATERAL MATTERS, POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATIONS AND YUGOSLAV MEDIA REQUESTS. THE DISCUSSION WAS CORDIAL AND A SOLID SCENE-SETTER FOR TITO'S VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER OPENING REMARKS, THE SECRETARY BRIEFED BELOVSKI IN DETAIL ON US VIEWS OF THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AND THE KEY ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED ENROUTE TO A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. HE STRESSED THAT ALL ASPECTS

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OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WERE CENTRAL TO A RESOLUTION AND SUGGESTED THAT THE PARTIES INVOLVED SHOULD WORK OUT THOSE ELEMENTS WHICH WERE COMPATIBLE IN AN INTERIM AGREEMENT. HE STATED THAT WE ARE NOW SEEKING A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD LEAD TO A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

3. BELOVSKI ASKED WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN ANY CHANGE IN OUR VIEW RECENTLY. THE SECRETARY REPLIED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN OUR APPROACH AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN

SOME PROGRESS. ALL PARTIES HAVE ENCOURAGED OUR FURTHER EFFORTS. THERE HAD, HOWEVER, BEEN NO MOVEMENT BY THE PLO AND RECENT EVENTS, INCLUDING THE ASSASSINATION IN LONDON, MAY HAVE MADE THINGS MORE DIFFICULT FOR IT. THE ARABS SAY THEY BELIEVE THE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION CAN BE RESOLVED IF A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES CAN BE AGREED.

4. BELOVSKI COMMENTED THAT IT WAS ALL PART OF A PROCESS AND THAT ADEQUATE ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ANSWER ISRAEL'S SECURITY CONCERNS. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT BEGIN WAS COMING TO WASHINGTON IN MID-MARCH AND THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US TO HAVE PRESIDENT TITO'S THOUGHTS ON HOW TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT AND LOOK TOWARD THE EVENTUAL RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. THE SOVIETS WANT AND NEED A ROLE IN A SETTLEMENT AND DESPITE THEIR CRITICISM, WE HAVE KEPT THEM FULLY INFORMED.

5. TURNING TO EUROCOMMUNISM, THE SECRETARY EMPHASIZED THAT OUR RECENT STATEMENT (JANUARY 12) REPRESENTED NO CHANGE OF POSITION, BUT WAS INTENDED TO CLARIFY IT

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IN VIEW OF RECENT DISTORTIONS OF OUR POLICY, ESPECIALLY IN ITALY. CLEARLY IT IS UP TO THE ITALIANS TO DECIDE WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT THEY WANT, BUT WE FELT WE NEEDED TO VOICE OUR CONCERN. BELOVSKI SAID THAT "SOME EUROPEANS" EXPECTED MORE "FLEXIBILITY" AND "OPENNESS" FROM THIS ADMINISTRATION, PERHAPS EVEN SOME FORM OF LIASION WITH THE ITALIAN, FRENCH OR SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTIES. THE SECRETARY REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT LIKELY. HE SAID TITO SHOULD FEEL FREE TO RAISE THIS ISSUE WITH THE PRESIDENT.

6. BELOVSKI THEN MENTIONED THE BELGRADE CSCE CONFERENCE AND SAID IT LOOKED LIKE IT WILL FAIL TO COME TO A SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT WE HAVE TRIED EVERY AVENUE OF COMPROMISE, WORKING WITH THE NNAS AND WITH EVERYONE ELSE IN HOPES OF PRODUCING A SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT. WE HAVE ALSO TALKED WITH THE SOVIETS, BUT THEY SAY ANY REFERENCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. BELOVSKI SAID THAT THE WHOLE MEETING IN BELGRADE HAD BEEN TOO "BLOC ORIENTED", IN CONTRAST TO THE MORE CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT AT HELSINKI. THE YUGOSLAVS FEEL "REAL DISAPPOINTMENT" AT THIS

OUTCOME, PARTLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN HOSTS, BUT MORE FOR THE FUTURE OF BUILDING COOPERATION IN EUROPE. THE SECRETARY REITERATED THAT WE HAD HOPED TO AGREE ON THE BASIS OF THE NNA DRAFT, BUT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT BUDGE. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE YUGOSLAVS APPROACH THE

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SOVIETS CONCERNING THEIR ATTITUDE.

7. THE SECRETARY SAID HE HAD READ PRESIDENT TITO'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER ON CSCE AND OTHER MATTERS AND THAT A REPLY WOULD BE FORTHCOMING. BELOVSKI SAID THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS IN THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAD BEEN VERY BENEFICIAL FOR OUR RELATIONS. THE SECRETARY AGREED AND THANKED THE AMBASSADOR FOR HELPING TO ARRANGE NSC DEPUTY CHIEF DAVID AARON'S RECENT VISIT TO ETHIOPIA.

8. ON THE ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICT; THE SECRETARY SAID WE BELIEVE ANY SETTLEMENT WILL REQUIRE THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI FORCE FROM THE OGADEN. WE WERE VERY CONCERNED, HOWEVER, IN CASE THE ETHIOPIANS OR THE CUBANS CROSS THE FRONTIER WITH SOMALIA. THE CUBAN PRESENCE NOW TOTALS ABOUT 10,000 COMBAT TROOPS, AND IF THEY CROSS INTO SOMALIA IT WILL PRESENT A MUCH MORE SERIOUS SITUATION. WE HAVE EXPRESSED THIS CONCERN TO THE ETHIOPIANS AND THE SOVIETS, AND THE SOVIETS SAY THEY DO NOT SUPPORT A BORDER CROSSING.

9. BELOVSKI REPLIED THAT YUGOSLAV VIEWS ON THIS QUESTION WERE VERY CLOSE TO OURS AND THAT THE EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE HAD HELPED TO CLARIFY THIS AND TO NARROW OUR DIFFERENCES. HE SAID RELATIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN BETTER DESPITE OCCASIONAL PROBLEMS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, THE YUGOSLAV SHIPMENT OF TANKS TO ETHIOPIA HAD BEEN A MISTAKE AND COULD HAVE BEEN A BIG PROBLEM, BUT IT WAS PROPERLY HANDLED AND THE RESULT WAS A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP. THE SECRETARY AGREED AND SAID HE HAD PERSONALLY APPROVED THE DECISION TO MAKE THE NOTIFICATION

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10. BELOVSKI SAID THAT PRESIDENT TITO MIGHT RAISE A FEW BILATERAL ISSUE, SO HE WANTED TO ALERT US. FIRST WAS THE NUCLEAR POWER QUESTION, ABOUT WHICH TALKS HAD RECENTLY BEEN HELD IN BELGRADE. HE HOPED THEY HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND THAT THE MATTER COULD BE RESOLVED BEFORE THE VISIT. ON THE EXIM BANK GUARANTEE PROBLEM, SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE BUT IT WAS A CONSTITUTIONAL MATTER FOR YUGOSLAVIA. ACTUALLY THE DIFFERENCES WERE SMALL, SAID BELOVSKI, AND COULD BE RESOLVED IN "A DAY OR TWO" OF FURTHER TALKS, GIVEN THE NECESSARY WILL. HE HOPED FOR MORE FLEXIBILITY FROM EXIM.

11. BELOVSKI THEN RAISED SECURITY FOR TITO'S VISIT, AND SPECIFICALLY THE PROSPECT FOR DEMONSTRATIONS. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT WE TAKE YUGOSLAV CONCERNS WITH

GREAT SERIOUSNESS AND HOPED TO HAVE PERMITS GRANTED ONLY ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE WHITE HOUSE, BUT THAT OUR CONSTITUTION PERMITTED PEOPLE TO ASSEMBLE AND EXERCISE FREE SPEECH. BELOVSKI MADE ALL THE ARGUMENTS HE HAS MADE BEFORE, STRESSING THE DAMAGE TO US INTERESTS, TITO'S CERTAIN IRRITATION AND THE NECESSITY TO "FIND A WAY" TO PREVENT ANY DEMONSTRATION. HE REITERATED THAT TITO HAD NOT YET BEEN INFORMED. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT WE WOULD DO ALL WE COULD WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE LAW.

12. BELOVSKI CLOSED BY STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING THE PRESIDENT BE INTERVIEWED FOR YUGOSLAV TELEVISION AND HE REQUESTED THAT THE SECRETARY AGREE TO BRIEF THE EIGHT RESIDENT YUGOSLAV CORRESPONDENTS. THE SECRETARY AGREED TO RAISE THE TV INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT AND TO SEE THE RESIDENT JOURNALISTS HIMSELF.

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13. COMMENT: THE MEETING WAS CORDIAL AND BUSINESSLIKE AND PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BELOVSKI TO HEAR OUR POSITION ON SEVERAL MATTERS WHICH WILL NO DOUBT COME UP DURING TITO'S VISIT. VANCE

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